

In the Claims

1. (Original) A near infrared absorption polymer comprising at least two different pendent infrared chromophoric moieties covalently bonded to the backbone of an alkali-soluble resin, at least one of which is an indole cyanine dye and the other of which is a benz[e]-indole cyanine dye.
2. (Currently Amended) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1, characterized in that the resin is an alkali soluble phenolic resin, ~~preferably a novolak resin.~~
3. (Currently Amended) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in ~~claims claim~~ claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, characterized in that the indole cyanine dye is selected from the group consisting of ~~formed by~~  
1-Butyl-2-(2-[3-[2-(1-butyl-3,3-dimethyl-1,3-dihydro-indol-2-ylidene)-ethylidene]-2-chloro-cyclohex-1-enyl]-vinyl)-3,3-dimethyl-3H-indolium hexafluorophosphate,  
2-[2-[2-Chloro-3-[2-(1,3-dihydro-1,3,3-trimethyl-2H-indol-2-ylidene)-ethylidene]-1-cyclopenten-1-yl]-ethenyl]-1,3,3-trimethyl-3H-indolium chloride, or  
2-[2-[2-Chloro-3-[2-(1,3-dihydro-1,3,3-trimethyl-2H-indol-2-ylidene)-ethylidene]-1-cyclopenten-1-yl]-ethenyl]-1,3,3-trimethyl-3H-indolium 4-methylbenzenesulfonate  
~~or~~ and other salts thereof.
4. (Currently Amended) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-3~~, characterized in that the benz [e]-indole cyanine dye is selected from the group consisting of ~~formed by~~  
2-[2-[2-Chloro-3-[2-(3-ethyl-1,3-dihydro-1,1-dimethyl-2H-benzo[e]indol-2-ylidene)-ethylidene]-1-cyclohexen-1-yl]-ethenyl]-3-ethyl-1,1-dimethyl-1H-benzo[e]indolium tetrafluoroborate, or  
3-Butyl-2-(2-[3-[2-(3-butyl-1,1-dimethyl-1,3-dihydro-benzo[e]indol-2-ylidene)-ethylidene]-2-chloro-cyclohex-1-enyl]-vinyl)-1,1-dimethyl-1H-benzo[e]indolium hexafluorophosphate, ~~or~~ and other salts thereof.
5. (Currently Amended) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-4~~, characterized in that the number ratio of indole cyanine dye to benz [e]-indole cyanine dye is comprised in the range of 1:1 to 1:5, ~~preferably in the range 1:1 to 1:2.~~
6. (Original) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 5, characterized in that the number ratio of indole cyanine dye to benz [e]-indole cyanine dye is about 1:1.

7. (Currently Amended) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-6~~, characterized in that the number ratio of total pendent IR chromophoric moieties relative to the parent alkali-soluble resin is comprised in the range from 1:50 to 1:3, ~~more preferably in the range from 1:30 to 1:5.~~
8. (Currently Amended) A heat sensitive positive working lithographic printing plate precursor comprising a substrate and a layer coated thereon, wherein the layer comprises the near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-7 in a layer coated on the substrate.~~
9. (Currently Amended) A heat sensitive positive working lithographic printing plate precursor as defined in claim 8 wherein ~~the~~ a dry coat weight of the coating layer comprising ~~[[a]]~~ the near infrared absorption polymer is in the range ~~1.4-1.9~~ 1.4-1.9 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
10. (Currently Amended) A process of manufacture of a heat sensitive positive working lithographic printing plate precursor, said process comprising: ~~which comprises~~  
 a) applying to a substrate a composition in a solvent wherein the composition comprises a near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1 to form a coated substrate; ~~any of claims 1-9 and~~  
 b) drying the coated substrate to ~~give~~ produce the plate precursor.
11. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a printing form from a heat sensitive positive working lithographic printing plate precursor, said method comprising: a) imagewise exposing a printing plate precursor as defined in claim ~~claims 8 or 9~~ with a near-infrared laser emitting at between 780 nm and 850 nm; and b) developing the precursor in a developing solution to remove the exposed areas.
12. (New) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1, characterized in that the resin is a novolak resin.
13. (New) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1, characterized in that the number ratio of indole cyanine dye to benz [e]-indole cyanine dye is comprised in the range of 1:1 to 1:2.
14. (New) A near infrared absorption polymer as defined in claim 1, characterized in that the number ratio of total pendent IR chromophoric moieties relative to the parent alkali-soluble resin is comprised in the range from 1:30 to 1:5.